

IOWA BIRD LIFE



Clark Scott

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The central design of the Union's official seal is the American Goldfinch, designated State Bird of Iowa in 1933.

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Iowa Yearly List:

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A Follow-up

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Last year we published some speculations about how many species of birds could be seen in one year in the state of Iowa. (IBL 49:3-8, 1979). In surrounding states (notably Minnesota), whose avifauna is similar to Iowa's, birders each year encounter a greater proportion of the state's species than Iowa birders. Analysis of the IOU Checklist of Iowa Birds suggested that a year's list of 250 species was not an immodest goal for a pair of employed, middle-aged, married males in the process of putting offspring through college. Four guidelines for tackling such a goal were proposed: high frequency of field trips, careful selection of time and habitat for field work, trips not just on "home grounds" but to other areas of the state in order to sample the full range of its species, and exploitation of tips regarding recent whereabouts of particular birds. When 1979 finally ended, one of us had succeeded in cracking 250, the other had not.

While 32 of our sorties were joint ventures, a much larger portion were made by each of us alone. In this follow-up of our 1978 quest, comparison of our separate performances tends to support the validity of the operational guidelines. But more importantly, we want to explain to all who would be dubious what a magnificent horizon 265 or 270 is for 1980 or later.

Table I outlines our month-by-month general objectives. In any statewide birding expectation, there are going to be two list groups: those species that

TABLE I MONTH-BY-MONTH STRATEGY

PERIOD	GOALS
Jan-Feb	Hawks, Ruffed Grouse, Wild Turkey, Owls, Winter Finches
Mar-early Apr	Geese, Ducks, Species missed in Jan-Feb
late Apr-May	Most Checklist species especially Herons, Rails, Shorebirds, Flycatchers, Vireos, Warblers, Sparrows
late May-Jul	Regional nesting specialties Western: Western Kingbird, Summer Tanager, Blue Grosbeak Southern: Chuck-will's-widow, Hooded Warbler, Yellow-breasted Chat Other: Swainson's Hawk, Henslow's Sparrow
late Jul-Aug	Shorebirds, Southern Herons
Sept	Migratory species missed in spring
Oct	Waterfowl, Sparrows missed in spring
Nov-Dec	Gallinaceous birds missed earlier, Winter Gulls, Owls, Winter Finches

regularly occur in the state (abiet some rarely) which are collated into the IOU Field Checklist, and those species that are casual or accidental. Search for species necessarily begins at home, for us Iowa City, and heaviest coverage tends to be in adjacent areas, for us Johnson County. In 1979 in pursuit of the strategies in Table I, we both tried to broaden our "intensive" birding to a six county "core" area that included Johnson, Louisa, Muscatine, Scott, Cedar and Linn Counties.

Forays outside the core area to parts of the state where certain species were more probably were necessary. Table II reviews those made in 1979. Two were prompted solely by "tied down" rarities (Barn Owl, Scissor-tailed Flycatcher). The success of these forays was on balance better than middling, especially for Kent who undertook several more trips than Shires. While most parts of the state were visited, failure to visit the northwest probably cost at least one species - Gary Partridge.

TABLE II ANALYSIS OF SORTIES OUTSIDE OF CORE AREA

DATE	OBSERVERS	PLACE	GOAL	SUCCESS
1 Feb	Kent, Shires	Shimek Forrest	Wild Turkey	nil
23-24 Mar	Kent, Shires, Halmi	Yellow River F.	Ruffed Grouse	nil
14-15 May	Kent, Shires	Fremont County	Am. White Pelican	+
			Summer Tanager	+
			Blue Grosbeak	+
			W. Kingbird	+
26 May	Kent, Shires	Hayden Prairie	Henslow's Sparrow	+
		Northeast Iowa	Swainson's Hawk	nil
9 Jun	Kent, Newlon, Huntington	Southeast Iowa	Carolina Wren	+
			Chuck-will's-widow	nil
			N. Mockingbird	nil
8 Jul	Kent, Shires	Southwest Iowa	Barn Owl	+
5 Aug	Kent, Shires, Halmi, Hollis, Bendorf	Ames	Scissor-tailed Flycatcher	nil
15 Aug	Kent	Green Island	Common Gallinule	+
24 Nov	Kent, Bendorf, Mulier, Schaufenbuel, Koenig	Allamakee County	Golden Eagle	+
			Ruffed Grouse	+

The total year's results are shown in Table III. Kent's year included all but 10 percent of the species on the IOU Field Checklist and 4 species not on the list. Collectively we saw 255 species compared with 291 species reported in IBL for the year (see Field Reports in this issue).

TABLE III ANALYSIS AND COMPARISON OF LISTS

	KENT	SHIRES
Species on Field Checklist not seen by either:	24	24
Species on Field Checklist seen by only one observer:	11	2
Other species seen by both:	3	3
Other species seen by one:	1	0
Total Field Checklist species seen (%):	248 (90 %)	239 (86 %)
Total state list for 1979:	253	243

The Field Checklist species missed by both observers were: Western Grebe, Snowy Egret, Mute Swan, Cinnamon Teal, Oldsquaw, Goshawk, Swainson's Hawk, Peregrine Falcon, Gray Partridge, King Rail, Marbled Godwit, Whimbrel, Willet, Buff-breasted Sandpiper, Little Tern, Snowy Owl, Saw-whet Owl, Chuck-will's-widow, Bewick's Wren, Northern Mockingbird, Bohemian Waxwing, Black-throated Blue Warbler, Hooded Warbler, and Common Redpoll. Six of these

species were not reported by anyone in the state in 1979 (Snowy Egret, King Rail, Whimbrel, Buff-breasted Sandpiper, Bewick's Wren and Common Redpoll). Of these, the Whimbrel is clearly an accidental species (less than 10 records for the state), and Snowy Egret, King Rail and Bewick's Wren are no longer regular. Buff-breasted Sandpiper is perhaps the rarest regular species and Common Redpoll was on a down cycle. Of the remaining 18 Field Checklist species that we missed, 4 (Western Grebe, Swainson's Hawk, Gray Partridge and Chuck-will's-widow) might have been found by travel to other areas of the state and help from other birders. The remaining 14 species are rare; Willet was the most significant miss and Snowy Owl and Northern Mockingbird were on down cycles.

Most of the species seen by one observer but not the other were uncommon or rare species found in the core area (Kent: Eared Grebe, Whistling Swan, Greater White-fronted Goose, Northern Phalarope, Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, Evening Grosbeak, Lapland Longspur; Shires: White-winged Crossbill, Sharp-tailed Sparrow), but 4 seen by Kent resulted from special trips (Golden Eagle, Ruffed Grouse, Common Gallinule, Carolina Wren).

Of the 21 casual and accidental species reported from the state in 1979, Kent saw 4 and Shires 3 (Red-necked Grebe, Black Scoter, Glaucous Gull, Yellow-throated Warbler). Two of these species are probably regular (Glaucous Gull, Yellow-throated Warbler).

The disparity between Shires' and Kent's lists can be partially explained by the trip data shown in Table IV. Within the core areas, both observers visited habitats in approximately the same proportions. Kent, however, birded considerably more frequently both within and outside of the core area. Further, during the critical spring months of April and May he made 44 trips compared to 25 for Shires.

TABLE IV CHARACTER OF BIRDING TRIPS

	KENT	SHIRES
Total sorties (+) in 1979	109	83
outside of core area	11 (10 %)	7 (8 %)
in core area	98 (90 %)	76 (92 %)
Habitat visited in core area		
marsh-slough	40	33
lake-reservoir	27	33
river-river bottoms	7	7
forrest-forrest margin	26	27
Accompaniment on sorties		
alone	62 (57 %)	50 (60 %)
with others	47 (43 %)	33 (40 %)
with Shires-Kent	32 (29 %)	32 (39 %)
+ a sorties is one round trip		

The weather and habitat conditions introduce a certain amount of luck into the best of plans. The winter of 1978-1979 presented heavy snow and bitter cold on top of a down cycle for winter species. Populations of Carolina Wren and Northern Mockingbird were particularly affected and winter finches were few at both ends of 1979. Only one Lapland Longspur was seen by Kent and none by Shires. The lateness of the spring, however, brought heavy flooding with abundant waterfowl and lasted long enough into April to attract shorebirds, gulls and terns. March 31 was a noteworthy day for Kent who saw 23 species of swans, geese and ducks on the Coralville Reservoir and Cone Marsh including Whistling Swan, Greater White-fronted Goose and Black Scoter.

Conditions in May were also favorable. May 12, a peak day for warbler fallout, luckily coincided with our planned "big day" count. On this day we saw 28 species of warblers including Worm-eating, Cape May and Yellow-throated to eclipse our record of 27 warblers on May 13, 1978. Our big day list of 143 bettered our previous highs of 136 on May 10, 1979 and 135 on May 11, 1978. Shorebird conditions were only fair in our area in the spring, but a trip to southwest Iowa produced the best single shorebirding that we can recall. On the extensive mudflats at Riverton Area there were hundreds of shorebirds of 18 species including American Avocet, Black-bellied Plover, Hudsonian Godwit (a record 100), Ruddy Turnstone, Western Sandpiper, Baird's Sandpiper and White-rumped Sandpiper (over 100). Earlier that morning we had found Summer Tanager, Blue Grosbeak and Western Kingbird within a period of 45 minutes. The morning count for Fremont County was 124 species.

The dry early summer produced excellent mudflats at the Coralville Reservoir for returning shorebirds in late July and early August. Northern Phalarope, Piping Plover and up to 50 Stilt Sandpipers were there before five inches of rain raised the water level and ended the shorebirding for a month. Fall weather in 1979 was unusually favorable and lasted through the end of the year. With persistent effort we found a few additional species such as Red-necked Grebe, Glaucous Gull, Pine Warbler and Red Crossbill. Shires found the rare Sharp-tailed Sparrow at Cone Marsh.

How many species can one individual see in Iowa in one year? We think it might be as many as 265 to 270 with extensive birding, further knowledge of locations of rare species, good conditions for winter species and shorebirds, and a lot of help from fellow birders.

In Memoriam

O. P. Allert

FRED J. PIERCE
WINTHROP, IOWA

The village of Giard in Clayton County, Iowa was fortunate to have among its residents a man of many talents. He could name all the birds that his neighbors had seen and described to him. He was a fine taxidermist who could mount hunters' trophies. He was an expert paper-hanger, house painter, carpenter, cabinetmaker and all-around repairman whose services were always in demand. His skillful hands found expression in many creations over the years.

This man was Oscar Paul Allert. He was born March 12, 1893, at Oshkosh, Wisconsin, the youngest of four sons of Rev. Carl F. Allert and the former Pauline Raadke. He very much disliked the name of Oscar. This name was almost forgotten and he was "Mike" to everyone most of his life.

The Reverend Allert was born in Germany and served as a minister for many years after coming to America. From Oshkosh the family moved to Chicago where young Oscar began to look at birds. His diaries first mentioned birds when he was in the seventh grade, with Lincoln Park as one of his favorite areas. He spent much time in the museum of the Chicago Academy of Sciences, and no doubt he was even then resolving to become a taxidermist.

Oscar moved to Iowa in 1916 and began farming the next year. He was a dairy farmer for many years, but sold his land, retaining only his house, in 1947. He married Amanda Witter in 1920. She died in 1933.

The rolling hills and dense woodland on his farm made a wonderful place to carry on bird study while he worked. He built a large dairy barn and cut and shaped the timbers with his own hands from trees in his woods. He became an excellent, self-taught ornithologist -- an authority on birds of Calyton and adjacent counties, both from his own observations and from specimens that were brought to him for mounting. His records were carefully compiled and it is our loss that he



Photographed by Fred Pierce on "The President," an excursion steamboat on the Mississippi, Aug. 14, 1941.

never took time to prepare a complete paper on the birds of the northeastern Iowa region he knew so well. Banding birds occupied his special interest for several years during which he banded 3,384 birds, with the records now in government files.

Mike liked trains and railroads. He worked for more than four years on an unusual O-gauge model railroad that included 110 scale model cars and 550 feet of track. The layout was spread through three rooms of the second story of his farm home, with holes cut through two walls ("tunnels") to allow uninterrupted extension of the tracks. There were bridges, water towers, elevators, coal chutes, and a tiny watchman's shanty complete with stove and watchman reading a newspaper, against a background of every type of railroad car rolling along on the Allert tracks. He made his models mostly of wood but with some metal, all gaily painted and decorated with the proper decals. The human figures and certain car parts he cast in metal. There was unbelievable accuracy with fine workmanship that surely reflected skills inherited from the German toymakers. He called his rail line the "Bloody Run and Western," using the name of a creek near Giard.

As a letter writer Mike was truly in a class by himself. His letters were witty and tinged with a salty humor that was always entertaining. Keenly interested in history and politics, he kept abreast of current events through extensive reading. He liked humorous printed stationery. One example was headed: "SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF EVERYTHING -- You Suggest, We Prevent. O. P. Allert, Honorary President." Another had this line under his name: "Since 1912 Maker of Fine Tobacco Ashes." One of his letters to me was on a piece of toilet paper 32 inches long. Another was typed, single-spaced, on a tape about two inches wide and five feet long. A high point in humor and hilarity was his series of letters (1937) on the life history of the Elephant Bird in eastern Iowa. He named this outrageous creature "*Gigantica nonexisti (Allert)*". The numerous friends who read the letters greatly enjoyed this product of Mike's fertile imagination. The letters never reached the printed page, but they were worthy of it.

He was a very good botanist who assembled a collection of hundreds of pressed plant specimens from his region. Geology was also a subject he studied for a time. The Allert family history was another project he worked on. At one time he made a large collection of butterflies. Collecting stamps and covers was a very active hobby for many years. He liked photography and took hundreds of pictures. As the expert craftsman, he turned book-binder and made his own albums, which were carefully shelved. A lover of music, he had a large record library.

Mike's roadside museum, in the front portion of his home, was a showplace that attracted hundreds of visitors yearly. He worked on his bird collection for about 30 years. The museum demonstrated his unusual skill as a taxidermist and cabinetmaker, as his birds were displayed in glass cases of his own construction.

School teachers and pupils from all over eastern Iowa came to the Allert museum to enjoy the informal, instructive talks by this knowledgeable bird man. The visitors often came without notice, but he was always willing to take time from his busy schedule to talk to them. Professional ornithologists often visited him and he exchanged specimens with scientific collectors to round out his various groups of birds.

Through arrangements with Iowa State University in the summer of 1944, the Allert collection of 708 mounts and study skins (about equally divided), representing about 300 species of birds, was transferred to Ames. It is part of the permanent collection of the Natural Science Museum. A plaque in the museum is inscribed:

In Memory of
O. P. "Mike" Allert
1893-1979
Pioneer Naturalist of Giard, Iowa
Who Prepared Many of the Specimens
Found in This Museum

Allert joined the Iowa Ornithologists' Union in 1929, was Treasurer in the years 1929 through 1933, and was elected as Honorary Life Member in 1976. He was a member of McGregor Methodist Church and Bezer Masonic Lodge 135, AF & AM. A past master of the lodge, he received a 50-year Masonic membership in February, 1978. He died in a McGregor care center December 5, 1979, aged 86. Burial was in the Giard cemetery.

CHRISTMAS COUNT



W. ROSS SILCOCK
MALVERN

This year's count was a record-breaker in most respects. Although a record 36 localities reported, Sac County was the only newcomer (and very welcome), with Mason City's return after last year's absence. The record of 34 was thus eclipsed. Wapsipinicon River Valley changed its name to Waterloo.

As usual, Davenport topped all lists with 68 species, but Omaha was a close second at 67, and DeSoto NWR third at 64. Three other counts reached 60: Clinton at 61, and both Cedar Rapids and Shenandoah at 60.

The overall species total was 119, a new record, eclipsing the previous high of 116 set in 1975. More comments below regarding species deleted from various reports.

Comments on Species Validation

This year I found myself in a dilemma regarding several reported species, and, in an attempt to be fair and consistent, I deleted species from some counts and not others, and entirely deleted two species. Reasons for these decisions are hereby tendered in an attempt to encourage local compilers to document species either unusual in their areas or difficult to identify.

Greater Scaup: This species was reported from Cedar Rapids, but while I received no documentation, same was forwarded to the *American Birds* compiler. As this is a rare but plausible species, and the compiler is well aware of the problems of its identification, I accepted the record pending its acceptance for *American Birds*.

Turkey Vulture: Three were reported this year. Last year I deleted this species from the Dubuque list for lack of documentation, and must do the same this year for Marshalltown. It was reported also from Eldora, but the details given suggest the possibility of an immature Bald Eagle, in that the bird had a "two-toned underwing pattern, blackish with silver-gray linings". A third report, from Davenport, was well-documented and accepted.

Broad-winged Hawk: The two reports of this species caused me problems. One was from Cedar Rapids, again documented for *American Brds*, but not for me. I

accepted this record also, pending acceptance for **American Birds**, due to the compiler's reputation in screening records, and for reasons outlined below regarding status of this species in Iowa in December. The second report was from Rathbun with no details and was thus deleted, not even being mentioned as unusual. The rather skimpy evidence for this species' occurrence in Iowa in December is based on DuMont's observation of a permanent resident pair in Polk County 1928-1930, and other sightings in December of 1925 and 1932. Brown also noted that there have been occasional winter records, as late as January 7, and in Illinois Bohlen states that "most winter records are highly doubtful", but cites two December records, one from the extreme northeastern part of Illinois. Furthermore, one was reported on the Hannibal, Missouri CBC in 1977 and accepted with this comment by the **American Birds** compiler: "Incredible, but I can find nothing wrong with the details."

Merlin: This species was reported from Red Rock Lake and Spirit Lake, neither report with accompanying details. However I accepted both, but will not in future without details, as this species must be well seen and is rare in early winter in Iowa. One was well-documented for the count period from Alleman.

Ruby-crowned Kinglet: This species was reported from three localities, with documentation and thus accepted from Cedar Falls and Iowa City and without same and deleted from Spirit Lake. As noted in last year's CBC summary, sightings of this species must be documented.

Yellow-headed Blackbird: Also very rare in Iowa in winter, this species was reported from DeSoto NWR, well documented and accepted, and from Ottumwa without details and deleted. This species should be easy to describe if well seen and of the male gender.

Brewer's Blackbird: A difficult species to identify in winter, and also rare at that time, being primarily a fall migrant in Iowa. In fall and early winter it is most similar to young Common Grackles, which may not as yet have noticeably "keeled" tails nor very long tails. This species was reported from DeSoto NWR with good details and accepted, and from Marshalltown (13 birds) and Spirit Lake (130) without details and deleted.

Dickcissel: I agonized over this report also. Again from Cedar Rapids, it was reported to be a female coming to a feeder with a flock of House Sparrows. In my experience in North Carolina, this was exactly how this species occurs (rarely) in that state in winter, and so I am in sympathy with the report. However no plumage details were given, and as female Dickcissels are not dissimilar to female House Sparrows, and Iowa is further north and west than North Carolina (even though we have infinitely more Dickcissels in summer), I had little choice than to delete it from the CBC list. However I suggest that the observer forward a note with identifying details to the Editor of **Iowa Bird Life** for publication.

Chipping Sparrow: This species was reported from two localities, Princeton and Lost Nation. The Princeton bird was said to have been "well observed", but this does not constitute an acceptable description of identifying field marks, and the record was deleted, as was the record of six birds from Lost Nation, forwarded without details. This species may occur in winter but would be but a rare straggler, and must be carefully described. Remember that in winter it does not look like it does in summer.

Best Birds

Apart from the Dickcissel report already discussed, there were four other species reported for the first time on Iowa CBCs, a rather amazing fact, eclipsing such other noteworthy reports as Snowy Owl, Townsend's Solitaire, and Bohemian

Waxwing.

Ross' Goose: One was finally picked out from among the Snow Geese at DeSoto NWR, although it is probably regular there. Identification is difficult however.

Greater Scaup: Also probably regular, but difficult to identify unless seen well. Two were seen at Cedar Rapids.

House Wren: One was seen at Yellow River Forest with a good description which adequately eliminated Winter Wren.

Northern Oriole: I despaired when I received a note that one at Mason City had been coming to a feeder unbeknownst to the counting group, but by remarkable coincidence another bird had been noted coming to a feeder in Omaha and was included in the count. In recent years increasing numbers of this species have been lured into wintering at feeders in the southeast U.S. when fruit is provided.

Notable Misses

As might be expected in a record count, few birds fit this category. Most obvious were:

Carolina Wren: This species finally seems to be extirpated as a winter bird after last year's crash following two harsh winters. This is the first time it has been missed in 13 years.

Common Redpoll: This was the first miss for 12 years, but it is not expected to occur every year in any case. Winter finches were notably absent this year, as discussed below.

Lincoln's Sparrow: This species has been recorded in 16 of the last 22 years, but it is an irregular winter resident in Iowa.

Population Comments

Waterfowl: The relatively mild weather was conducive to large increases in this category mostly because of larger areas of open water. The increases in numbers were most obvious among diving ducks, which winter as far north as open water permits. Taken together, Common Goldeneye and Common Merganser numbers were up five-fold from the average number over the last three years. Snow Geese also showed a 2-3 fold increase, but Mallards were up only about 50 percent. Large numbers of the latter species winter in the southwest part of the state and are somewhat independent of large areas of open water.

Diurnal Raptors: Red-tailed Hawks were present in normal numbers, whereas both Rough-legged Hawks and Bald Eagles were low, both down about 50 percent from their prior four-year averages of Birds Per Party (BPP, note that some bias occurs in this figure due to inclusion by some compilers of feeder-watchers in total parties). Light snow cover north of Iowa may explain the low Rough-legged numbers, but Bald Eagles might have been expected to be higher along with waterfowl numbers. My impression is that there were fewer immatures this year.

Gallinaceous birds: Even though only eight Gray Partridge were reported (down from last year's 291), one compiler noted that the species is doing very well, but lack of snow cover made them hard to find. Ring-necked Pheasants were in normal numbers, down from last year's high levels, but Bobwhites may be in trouble, down three-fold from their prior three-year average of 3.5 BPP. Last year's severe winter probably is significant in this decline.

Gulls: These birds were up some 4 to 5-fold over the normal levels, mostly due to open water as in the case of waterfowl, discussed above.

Owls: Noteworthy in this group were the 52 Great Horned Owls reported on the North Linn count, and the statewide total of seven Saw-whet Owls.

Woodpeckers: Of the two species which enter the state in fall and winter from further north, Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers increased two-fold and Common Flickers were up some 1.5 fold over their respective 3-year averages. This possibly indicates that fewer continued on south due to the milder weather conditions. The four resident species (Pileated, Red-bellied, Hairy and Downy) continue to do well, maintaining last year's increased levels over prior years. The summer resident Red-headed Woodpecker remained in very large numbers, 8.7 BPP compared with average levels of only 1.2 BPP in recent years. This year's levels were higher even than the great year of 1977 when 6.2 BPP were recorded.

Field Flocking Birds: Lack of snow cover and mild weather was probably the reason for this year's crash in numbers in this group. Horned Larks had 2.3 BPP versus 36 last year, Lapland Longspur 0.3 versus 9.1, and Snow Bunting 0.6 versus 4.6 last year.

Red-breasted Nuthatch: Only six were reported statewide this year, down from the relatively constant levels of the past three years of 34-56 birds, or about a ten-fold drop in BPP.

Thrushes: American Robin numbers exploded some 16-fold over last year, probably because of mild weather and abundant wild berries, but Eastern Bluebirds remain low in numbers. Only 26 were reported statewide, as against 26 and 58 the previous two years, but even this is better than the single bird reported in 1976.

Golden-crowned Kinglet: After two low years related to harsh winters, this species gained ground significantly this year, with a four-fold increase in BPP over the prior two years.

Cedar Waxwing: A significant increase in BPP over the prior three-year average was seen for this species this year, of about 2-3 fold. Availability of wild berries probably was important in this increase.

Meadowlarks: Total meadowlarks reported this year were 158 (0.8 BPP) compared with last year's very high level of 6.9 BPP. However last year's total was unusual, as the average level is about 3.2 BPP, but this year still showed a marked decline of some four-fold over usual levels. With relatively mild weather it raises the question whether last year's tough winter reduced the meadowlark population drastically, possibly most significantly among those birds which breed north of Iowa and normally move into our state in winter.

Winter finches: Again, a drought this year in this group. Here is a table showing occurrence of these birds over the past four years:

	1979	1978	1977	1976
Evening Grosbeak	5	20	25	2
Purple Finch	136	711	511	632
Pine Grosbeak	0	0	43	0
Common Redpoll	0	11	468	20
Pine Siskin	14	415	466	53
Red Crossbill	10	0	0	183
White-winged Crossbill	0	0	0	15

Of those species which are reasonably regular in some numbers (Purple Finch and Pine Siskin), both were markedly lower this year. Purple Finch some four-fold compared with its prior three-year average and Pine Siskin was essentially absent compared to its levels of the previous two years. Redpolls were absent this year, but a few Red Crossbills were found for the first time in three years.

Winter resident sparrows: The following table shows the levels of these species over the last four years:

	1979	1978	1977	1976
Northern Junco	14,252	14,976	11,770	14,451
Am. Tree Sparrow	11,277	7,964	9,396	13,635
Harris' Sparrow	335	328	591	491
Wh.-crowned Sparrow	46	105	154	102
Wh.-throated Sparrow	45	45	41	101

As can be seen, last year's concern about the decline in Am. Tree Sparrow numbers was alleviated somewhat this year, although the 1976 levels have not been regained, as is true for all five species, although most noticeably in the case of the three *Zonotrichia* species. Harris' and White-throated Sparrows remained low and White-crowned Sparrow declined about 50 percent from last year's levels. On the other hand, Northern Junco seems to be doing well.

1. ALLEMAN (15 mile diameter circle centered on Alleman and including Big Creek Lake, Chichaqua Wildlife Refuge, Jester Park, Saylorville Dam north to Jester Park, and areas between these locations.) Dec. 18: 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Temp. 32-45; wind: 5 mph from S. Clear, ground bare, some open water.

Observers (14) in 4 parties: Eugene and Eloise Armstrong, Margaret Brooks, Jeff Logsdon, Steve Maloy, John McClothlen, Dick Mooney, Dean Mosman (compiler), Diane Mosman, Mike Mosman, Jesse Parr, Scott Rolfes and Danielle Wirth, plus Steve Fairbanks.

Details of unusual observations: The N. Mockingbird was seen by at least 6 observers in Jester Park.

Other species seen during census period: Horned Lark.

Comments: Tape recordings used to attract owls.

2. BURLINGTON (15 mile diameter circle centered on highway 99 at Flint Creek bridge and including Lock and Dam 18, Carthage Lake, Mississippi River bottoms, and part of Iowa Army Ammunition Plant.) Dec. 22: 7:15 a.m. to 5 p.m. Temp. 35-53; wind: 0-5 mph from N. Overcast and fog a.m., light showers and rain p.m. (0.71 inch); Mississippi 90 percent ice free.

Observers (13) in 4 parties: Margaret and Nancy Barker, Roy Clugg, Tom Francis, Laura, James and Jane Fuller, Gayle George, Frederic Leopold, Anna Mae, Caryn and Peter Lowther (compiler), Anne Williamson.

Other species seen during census period: C. Screech Owl, Pileated Woodpecker, Evening Grosbeak.

3. CEDAR FALLS (A 15-mile diameter circle centered at the intersection of U.S. 20 and Main Street in Cedar Falls, Ia. and including George Wyth State Park, Black Hawk County Park, portions of the Leonard Katoski Greenbelt, Hartman Nature Reserve, Strayer Road, University of Northern Iowa Biology Reserve.) Dec. 22: 5:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Temp. 20-41; wind: 5-10 mph from N.E. Overcast with fog in a.m.; overcast with fog and light rain in p.m.; snow cover - zero; fresh water partly open.

Observers (9) in 3 parties, plus 1 at feeders: Eleanor Corwin, Hulda Flynn, Mary Groothoff, Russell Hays, Milo Mecham, Francis Moore (compiler), Bob Meyers, Lois Sherman, Tom and Tom, Sr. Stone, (Waterloo Audubon Society.)

Other species seen during census period: American Kestrel, Tufted Titmouse.

Comments: The three C. Screech Owls were located by use of a small hand-held tape recorder, otherwise this particular species would not have made a showing on the count day. If it were not for the fog, which was detrimental at times, our observers could not have asked for a better day in Northern Iowa for a Christmas Bird Count.

4. CEDAR RAPIDS (41 59' N 91 40' W. Center Federal Bldg. as described in 1978.) Dec. 15: 4:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Temp. 18-48; wind: 10-25 mph from S.W. Partly cloudy, no snow, streams partly open. River and Cedar Lake open.

Observers (47) in 18 parties, plus 6 at feeders: Gail Beam, Lester Beam, Larry Bean, Bob Bradley, Duane Carr, Keith Carris, John Daniel, Robert Drexler, Floy Erikson, Shirley Foley, Dale Fye, Tim Gates, Karl Goellner, Ruth Goellner, Linda Gucciardo, Irene Hearther, John Hingtgen, Vicki Hixson, Marie Johnson, Jim Kettlekamp, Beryl Layton, Lucile Liljedahl, Gertrude Lippisch, Jeff Megown, Iris Muchmore, Weir Nelson (compiler), Fred Nissen, Ruth Nissen, Mark Ogden, Roberta Oppedahl, Bert Rosenberg, Nancy Rosenberg, Joan Sanders, Bobby Shaffer, Ellen Shaffer, Marsha Snyder, Rick Snyder, Joy Stoker, Fred Thompson, Jim Unmacht, Jean Vane, Robert Vane, Gayle Wallace, Peter Wickham, Aldrich Zobac, Cindy Zoback.

Details of unusual observations: Dickcissel has been coming to a feeder all fall with a flock of House Sparrows (a female).

Other species seen during census period: N. Mockingbird, Pine Siskin, Cooper's Hawk.

Comments: We had better coverage, more observers than ever before. Many species seen were north of normal wintering area. The northern finches etc. were non-existent. We are very optimistic about the future of our club and our Christmas counts.

5. CHEROKEE (15 mile diameter circle centered on U.S. 59, 2 miles south of Larrabee to include Martins Access, Little Sioux River, Mill Creek and the Cherokee Sewage Lagoons.) Dec. 16: 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Temp. -6-5; wind: 15-20 mph from N.W. Clear. Less than 1" of snow. Rivers and streams 50 percent frozen, Ponds 100 percent frozen.

Observers (13) in 5 parties: Sandy Beals, Carolyn and Larry Benne, Judy and Dick Bierman (compiler), Marion "Shorty" Brewer, Ray Cummins, Ron Dudley, Larry Farmer, Bob Hoge, Dave Johnson, Arlene Sweet and Shirley Wahlstrom.

Details of unusual observations: The Brown Thrasher appeared cold but healthy.

Other species seen during census period: Common Grackle, Mallard, Gray Partridge, Bald Eagle, Short-eared Owl, Loggerheaded Shrike, Rufous-sided Towhee.

Comments: Gray Partridge were not seen because of lack of snow cover. This species is common and doing well in this area. The wind chill was -48 degrees when I left Larry Farmer and Dave Johnson out to walk the Little Sioux River. They were out for 8 hours and walked 15 miles, a very commendable effort!!!

6. CLINTON (15 mile diameter circle, centered on Elk River Jct. same as previous years.) Dec. 29: 6 a.m. to 5:15 p.m. Temp. 22-40; wind: 0-5 mph from W. Mostly clear, ground bare, river 25 percent ice covered.

Observers (10) in 3 parties: John Crayton, Don Graves, Fred and Jonathan Leshner, William Martin, Mark Mosey, Mary Lou Petersen, Peter C. Petersen (compiler), Clark Scott and Paul Van Nieuwenhuysse.

Details of unusual observations: Yellow-rumped Warbler attracted by C. Screech Owl tape, documented (PCP,CS).

7. DAVENPORT (15 mile diameter circle, centered on former toll house location on the I 74 bridge, same as previous years.) Dec. 16: 5 a.m. to 5 p.m. Temp. 18-8; wind: 15-35 mph from NW. Cludy to clear, snow flurries early, ground essentially bare, river 10 percent ice covered.

Observers (40) in 22 parties: Mrs. Fred Adams, Carl Bengston, Bill Bertrand, Brian, Corey and Lewis Blevins, Brad Boyd, Linda Caldwell, Jane Carpenter,

Walter Dau, Dale Dickinson, Richard Evans, Elton Fawks, Don Graves, Dorothy Hall, Mary Hawkinson, Dick Hazel, Marge Hollen, Mrs. Fred Hunt, Tom Kent, Ann Mae Burney, Jenny Martin, Ed and Gladys Meyer, Tom Mitchell, Janet Moline, Ralph and Sara Money, Dave Nelson, Gary Newman, Mary Lou Petersen, Peter C. Petersen (compiler), Harold Ray, Clark Scott, Tom Shires, Mr. and Mrs. Leonard Swanson, Michael and Ralph Troll and Levi Wood.

Details of unusual observations: Turkey Vulture seen in flight, documented (JC). Glaucous Gull, an immature, seen with many other gulls, documented (TK,TS).

Other species seen during census period: Canvasback, Hooded Merganser, Bobwhite, Brown Thrasher, Hermit Thrush, Shrike (sp.)

Comments: Poor year for winter finches. Some parties used C. Screech Owl tape to attract woodland birds resulting in less hiking and trespassing.

8. DECORAH (A 15-mile diameter circle centered on NE corner S24, T99N, R8W.) Dec. 15: 5 a.m. to 5 p.m. Temp. 29-47; wind: 17-25 mph from S. Partly cloudy, no snow cover, water mostly open.

Observers (18) in 6 parties: Florence Albright, Francis Arness, Elizabeth, Bottorff, Alan Branham, Chris Cudsworth, Ruth Fretheim, Oivind Hovde, Karen Iseminger, Darwin Koenig (compiler), Pat and Paul Koenig, Beth Landas, Marlene Michel, Andrew and Dale Nimrod, Arnold and Dolores Rohm, Joe Schaufenbuel.

Other species seen during census period: Canada Goose and Northern Harrier.

9. DES MOINES (Waterworks Park, Greenwood & Ashworth Parks, Walnut Woods, Moffitt Reservoir, Lakewood area, N.W. county roads, Saylorville Lake, Margo Franekl & Crocker Woods, Easter Lake.) Dec. 22: 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Temp. 32-43; wind: 0-8 mph from NE. Fog and drizzle. Very poor visibility. No ground cover.

Observers (19) in 5 parties: Eugene Armstrong (compiler), Eloise Armstrong, Ruth Binsfield, Bill Boller, Margaret Brooke, Randy Brose, Ruth Buckles, Oliver Graves, Gladys Haskell, Joe Kennedy, Dick and Pauly Mooney, Dean, Diane and Mike Mosman, Randy Nardaker, Mark Rouw, Dennis Thompson and Lorene Warters.

10. DeSOTO NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE (A 15 mile diameter circle centered on DeSoto Natonal Wildlife Refuge headquarters.) Dec. 22: 5 a.m. to 5 p.m. Temp. 29-40; No wind. Morning - overcast and low clouds, scattered rain; afternoon - overcast with some fog and misting. No snow cover. Water 98 percent frozen.

Observers (20) in 5 parties: Tanya Bray, Hal Chase, Bill Gidley, Ruth Gochenour, Ruth Green, Janet Greer, Alan Grenon, Thomas Hoffman, Charles Johnson, Eric Joranson, Sandy Kovanda, David Menke, Steve Moorman, Babs Padelford, Loren Padelford, Neal Ratzlaff, Ross Silcock, Phyllis Walker, Barb Wilson, Rick Wright.

Details of unusual observations: Documentation supplied for these species: Snowy Owl, Ross' Goose, Brewer's Blackbird, Blue-winged Teal, Yellow-headed Blackbird and Townsend's Solitaire.

Other species seen during census period: Barred Owl, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Rufus-sided Towhee.

Comments: We reported many more waterfowl species than usual with the exception of the snowy owl many winter species were not preseft this year (Horned Larks, Buntings). No Meadowlarks this year!

Observers (20) in 5 parties: Tanya Bray, Hal Chase, Bill Gidley, Ruth Gochenour, Ruth Green, Janet Greer, Alan Grenon, Thomas Hoffman, Charles

[illegible]

[illegible]

Johnson, Eric Joranson, Sandy Kovanda, David Menke (compiler), Steve Moorman, Babs Padelford, Loren Padelford, Neal Ratzlaff, Ross Silcock, Phyllis Walker, Barb Wilson and Rick Wright.

11. DUBUQUE (15 mile diameter circle with center at Center Grove cemetery and including Linwood, Industrial Island, John Deere, Durango, Peosta, Swiss Valley, Massey, E. Dubuque.) Dec. 15: 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. Temp. 29-43; wind: 15 mph from SW. Clear with some high overcast; no snow cover; river partly open; wild food crop good.

Observers (16) in 8 parties, plus 3 at feeders: Frieda and George Crossley (compiler), Jim Eischeid, Peter Ernzen, Adele Feller, Lila and Willis Grunwell, David Hartig, William Herrmann, Joan Higley, Brian Larson, John C. Miller, James and Laurel Rooks, Phyllis Shultz, John Stampe, Neil Trevethan, Robert Walton and Wauneta Wiederaenders.

Details of unusual observations: Numerous E. Bluebirds, a pair of G. Catbirds, and a flock of some 30 Wild Turkeys have been seen regularly during December at Swiss Valley Nature Preserve. James Rooks, naturalist at E. B. Lyons Prairie Woodland Preserve, saw the Redwing and documented the Yellow-rumped Warbler.

Other species seen during census period: Sharp-shinned Hawk.

12. ELDORA (15 mile diameter circle centered on Gifford and including Daisy Long and Bates Parks, Pine Lake area, Iowa River valley, Steamboat Rock, Reece Park, roadsides and fields in between.) Dec. 31: 7 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Temp. 27-35; wind: 10 mph from NW. Overcast, no snow cover, river open, lake 95 percent frozen over, below dam open stream to river.

Observers (2) in 1 party: Ramona Sommerlot (compiler) and Garnita Seward.

Details of unusual observations: Brown Thrashers seen at 20 feet searching for food by flinging leaves with beak, in wooded area of lake side homes. Noted heavily streaked breast and belly, wing-bars, rich rufous color, long tail.

Other species seen during census period: Hairy Woodpecker, Am. Robin.

Comments: Because of mild, open winter, the birds were widely scattered and noticeably fewer in number. Many of the northern species not arrived in this area.

13. IOWA CITY (A 15-mile diameter circle centered on the intersection of U.S. 218 and County Rd. F-28 and including the Hawkeye Wildlife Area, Coralville, Lake Macbride State Park, and portions of Iowa City and Coralville.) Dec. 15: 5:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Temp. 29-50; wind: 10-20 mph from SW. Weather mostly clear, no snow cover, water partly open.

Observers (29) in 8 parties, plus 1 at a feeder: Carl Bendorf, Noel Brown, Mona Brown, Barbara Burek, Linda Caldwell, Terry Cox, Rich DeCoster, Barbara Haring, Lanny Haldy, Rick Hollis, Jack Kaplan, Tom Kent, Cal Knight, Bernie Knight, Dawson Mohler, Tom Moore, Mike Mulier, Carol Newlon, Mike Newlon (compiler), Mary Noble, Mr. and Mrs. Edward Perkins, Helena Perkins, Julia Perkins, Peter Petersen, Deborah Quade, Nancy Sheehan, Cynthia Shires, Tom Shires, Ruth Williams.

Details of unusual observations: Ruby-crowned Kinglet, documented. Numbers and species of waterfowl and of icterids were unusually high. Bobwhite were completely absent, perhaps due to last year's hard winter. Ruby-crowned Kinglet and Herring Gull were new species for the count.

Comments: Four parties spent a total of 3½ hours 'owling' with tape recorders before dawn.

14. JAMAICA (A 15 mile diameter circle centered 1½ miles West and 4 miles South of Jamaica, Iowa, covering the Northeast corner of Guthrie County and portions of Greene and Dallas Counties, and includes Springbrook State Park,

Lakin Slough, Bays Branch Wildlife Conservation area, Lake Panorama, Long Pond, RR tracks, fields, pastures, streams and a portion of the North Raccoon River.) Dec. 30: 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Temp. 32-44; wind: 5-10 mph from NW. Ground clear of snow. Lake Panorama, Lakin Slough and Bays Branch frozen over except where thousands of ducks and geese keeping a portion open. Other small streams and Raccoon River unfrozen. Sky overcast.

Observers (17) in 6 parties, plus 20 at feeders: Eloise and Eugene Armstrong, Randy Ault, Dick Bierman, Gene (compiler) and Marilyn Burns, Raymond Cummins, Craig and Ron Harms, Dick and Pauly Mooney, Greg and Paul Nelson, Steve Patterson, Mark Rouw, Dr. Wm. A. Seidler and Diane Spott.

Details of unusual observations: Many thousands of ducks and geese kept a portion of Lake Panorama and Bays Branch area open; 16 species of waterfowl in these two areas observed by Dick Bierman and Raymond Cummins who are experts at waterfowl identification. Red-headed Woodpecker population up considerably from last year probably due to unseasonably warm weather the last few weeks.

Other species seen during census period: Short-eared Owl.

Comments: Gene and Marilyn Burns able to call up 3 C. Screech Owls at 2 a.m. on day of count by using vocal call only and no tape recorder.

15. KEOSAUQUA (15 mile diameter circle centered on Keosauqua, and including Lacey-Keosauqua State Park, country roads, Des Moines River bottoms and bluffs.) Dec. 29: 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Temp. 26-37; wind: 0-5 mph from NW. Heavy overcast, fog, everything covered with frost; no snow; river open.

Observers (2) in 1 party: Kathy Fisher (compiler), Oneita Fisher.

Details of unusual observations: As we were watching a large flock of Cedar Waxwings feeding in cedar trees, one bird suddenly stood out from the rest of the mob. The colorful wings were as distinctive as if the bird had been waving a flag. The Bohemian stayed in sight for some time -- long enough to also note its relatively larger size and the red under tail-coverts.

Other species seen during census period: American Kestrel, Common Grackle, Horned Lark.

Comments: Hawk numbers were way down, probably because of the weather. Last winter was very hard on the Bobwhite and they are absent from this year's count.

16. LAMONI (15 mile diameter circle centered at the junction of I-35 and U.S. 69 east of Lamoni including country roads, pasture, farmland, and Nine Eagles State Park.) Dec. 26: 6 a.m. to 5 p.m. Temp. 25-45; wind: 5 mph from N. to calm, clear, no snow cover, streams and ponds 80 percent frozen.

Observers (7) in 3 parties, and one at feeder: Leslie Barnett, Genevieve DeLong, Bill Gillaspay, J. Donald Gillaspay (compiler), Dan Long, Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Silver.

Details of unusual observations: The unusual find this year was a flock of several hundred Cedar Waxwings in and around Nine Eagles State Park. Dozens of Am. Robins and a few E. Bluebirds were feeding with them on the berries of Red Cedar trees. These birds were observed for over an hour by J. Donald Gillaspay and the Silvers. Our figures are conservative. We counted waxwings by the treeful, and at close range. A flock of Mourning Doves was found at an evening roost in a cornfield at another location. No Horned Larks seen any time.

Other species seen during census period: Common Grackle.

Comments: Tape recorder used on owls. Very helpful in locating C. Screech Owls.

17. LOST NATION (a 15 mile diameter circle centered on point approximately

1½ miles south of Lost Nation and including Mockridge Wildlife Preserve, Wapsi River, and Eden Valley Refuge) Dec. 27: 5:45 a.m. to 5:20 p.m. Temp. 30-25; wind: 5 mph from NW; a.m. cloudy, p.m. clear, no precipitation, no snow cover; Wapsi River open, ponds and sloughs 90 to 100 percent ice covered.

Observers (11) in 3 parties: Bob Bryant (compiler), Denny Corbin, Don Graves, Lee Lee; Lindsay Lee; Mr. and Mrs. Harold Lohmann; Jeanette Ruprecht, Clark Scott, Charles and June Wentworth.

Details of unusual observations: Northern Shrike observed for 10-15 minutes along roadside, feeding upon mouse impaled on hawthorn; observers: June Wentworth, Charles Wentworth, and Jeanette Ruprecht.

Comments: Tape recorder used to attract owls and other birds.

18. Marble Rock (area same as previous years) Dec. 24: 7 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Temp. 30 to 35; wind: 20 mph from north. Sky was completely overcast all day with a constant wind of about 20 mph; gusts up to 30 mph. No snow cover anywhere. Streams and river were 90 percent ice free.

Observers (2) in 1 party: Pearl Knoop, Tom Staudt (compiler).

Details of unusual observations: A Saw-whet Owl was seen at a distance of about forty feet. I got a short but good look at this small brownish, streaked owl. White facial markings were visible, no ear tufts were seen. Less than 30 minutes later I observed a C. Screech Owl at about the same distance. The size and coloration of this bird confirmed the identification of the Saw-whet Owl for me.

Other species seen during census period: Red-tailed Hawk Common Grackle, Purple Finch.

Comments: Am. Tree Sparrows were up considerably, only one seen last year. The pheasant population is most likely higher but with the wind and lack of snow cover I'm assuming they were scattered around the area. Also the Rough-legged Hawk was dark phased.

19. MARSHALLTOWN (15-mile diameter circle centered on E 27 one mile east on highway 14 and including Union Grove Lake; same as previous years.) Dec. 15: 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Temp. 30 to 45; wind 10-25 mph from SW. Clear to partly cloudy, no snow cover. Lake 90 percent frozen; Iowa River 75 percent open.

Observers (21) in 5 parties: plus three at feeders: Thelma Christensen, Mr. and Mrs. Geo. Crowther, Ann Davenport, Mr. and Mrs. Norman Eige, Freida Ellerbeck, Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Graham, Mr. and Mrs. Carl Hollingsworth, Mr. and Mrs. John King, Carl Kurtz, Mrs. John Mowry, Mr. and Mrs. James Plambeck, Mr. and Mrs. James Wignall, and Ruth Zorn.

Details of unusual observations: Yellow-bellied Sapsucker seen at the Laura Glasgow residence, Brown Thrasher seen at the Dale Devick residence.

Other species seen during census period: Pine Siskin.

Comments: Absence of Song Sparrows on the count this year noteworthy. Pileated Woodpeckers seen in two different locations.

20. MASON CITY (15 mile diameter circle centered on intersection of S56 and B25, including Shell Rock Preserve and many other conservation areas. Not the same as three previous years.) Dec. 15: 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Temp. 46-30; wind: 12-25 mph from SW-NW aft. Calm, pleasant morning with southerly wind switching to NW with stronger gusts, temp. dropping. No snow cover yet. Rivers less than 50 percent ice cover. Standing bodies of water 100 percent cover.

Observers (15) in 5 parties: plus 3 at feeders: Dorothy Brunner, Russell Brunner, Virgil Ennes, Thelma Fromm, Jim Hansen, Jim Heintzman, Curt Krieger (compiler), Beth Luehmann, Beth McBride, Genevieve Nelson, Reva and Harold Pedelty, Edna Peters, Mrs. Ted Rumeliote, Ben and Wendy VanGundy, Jim and Jan Walter.

Details of unusual observations: Northern Oriole was in our area since earlier in December, but was unknown to our club members until Dec. 28, when it was viewed in good light and at close range by Dorothy Brunner. The bird was witnessed under similar conditions the next day by Curt Krieger. It was a male with all identifying characters, feeding on apples at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Delbert VanGambleare.

Other species seen during census period: Gray Partridge, C. Screech Owl, Pileated Woodpecker, Northern Oriole.

21. MUSCATINE (15 mile diameter circle, centered on Lock and Dam 16, same as previous years). Dec. 22: 6 a.m. to 4 p.m. Temp. 42-48; wind: 5-20 mph from SW; overcast, fog, intermittent heavy rain; really quite dismal; ground bare, river 20 percent ice covered (as well as we could see it).

Observers (11) in 5 parties: Mrs. Vincent Beckey (feeder), Tim Dwyer, Don Graves, Allan Hahn, Bill and T. H. Kent, Mike Newlon, Peter C. Petersen (compiler), Clark Scott, Tom Shires, Wade Williams.

Comments: Weather conditions just about the worst encountered in 128 counts (PCP).

22. NORTH LINN (42 degrees 12' N 91 degrees 35' W Centered at Rogers Crossing. 60 percent farmland, 30 percent parkland, 10 percent streamside including Wapsipinicon River) Dec. 29: 5 a.m. to 5 p.m. Temp: 28 to 40; wind: 0-5 mph from variable; mostly clear, no snow, water mostly open.

Observers (29) in 10 parties: Carol Bell, Karen Bradley, Rob Bradley, Duane Carr, Keith Carris, Shirley Foley, Dale Fye, Helen Fye, Karl Goellner, Ruth Goellner, Vi Groth, Robert Hancock, Linda Keller, Julia Ladd, Beryl Layton, Lucile Liljedahl, Kevin Murray, Brian Nelson, Weir Nelson (compiler), Roberta Oppedahl, Joan Sanders, Joe Sanders, Bobbie Shaffer, Jane Shutleworth, Rick Snyder, Fred Thompson, Jim Unmacht, Gayle Wallace, Pete Wickham.

Other species seen during census period: Northern Harrier.

Comments: Most observers ever, but weather too nice. Best covering and searching of varied habitat yet. Birds evidently too spread out.

23. OAKVILLE (15 mile diameter circle, centered 4 miles E of New Boston, Ill.) Dec. 30: 6 a.m. to 5 p.m. Temp. 28 to 38; wind: 0-5 mph from N; mostly cloudy, ground bare, river open.

Observers (9) in 4 parties: Bill Bertrand, Bill Davis, Ann Hylbak, Lynn McKeown, Dave Nelson, Mary Lou Petersen, Peter C. Petersen (compiler), Clark Scott, Edwin L. Wiederrecht.

Details of unusual observations: Yellow-rumped Warbler documented.

24. OMAHA, NEBR. (a 15-mile diameter circle centered at Offutt Base Lake, to include Fontenelle Forest, Lake Manawa (Iowa) State Park, Plattsmouth Waterfowl Refuge, and portions of the Platte and Missouri Rivers; habitat coverage: woodlands 53 percent, cultivated fields 25 percent, grassy fields and meadows 6 percent, rivers and lakes 6 percent) Dec. 15: 4 a.m. to 5 p.m. a.m. p.m. clear; Temp. 34-51; wind: 11-15 mph S, clear ground bare, water: lakes and ponds frozen, rivers and streams open.

Observers: (47) in 12 parties, 1 at feeders: Steve Bellinghiere, Russ Benedick, Tanya Bray, Duane Bright, Hal Chase, Dorothy Chisholm, R. G. Cortelyou, James Glathar, Donna Gnadt, Ruth Gochenour, Marjorie Graf, Ruth Green, Janet Greer, Alan Grenon, Betty Grenon, Mary Harberg, Carr Heaney, Mik Heaney, Thomas Hoffman, Bryan Howell, Clyde and Emma Johnson, Jim and Sandy Kovanda, Gary Lindauer, Debi Link, Marian Meier, Dave Menke, Wanda Neaderhiser, Cathy Nelson, Babs and Loren Padelford, Neil Ratslaff, Jean Rickter, Linda Riner, Harold and Marilyn Rock, Elva Sheard, Sam Strutman, John and Marlene

Weber, Chet Thomas, John Thomas, Kate Thompson, John Upchurch, Melba Wigg (compiler).

Details of unusual observations: No. Oriole, at feeder, Fontenelle Hills.

25. OSKALOOSA (15 mile diameter circle centered on the Mahaska County Courthouse, including Lake Keomah) Dec. 28: 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Temp. 27 to 33; wind: 5 mph from west, no snow, ground frozen, running water not frozen, lake and ponds frozen.

Observers (2) in 1 party: Keith and Irene Layton (compiler) plus observers at 6 feeders.

Comments: Hawk migration did not exist in our area, several other fairly common species were not found at all.

26. OTTUMWA (a 15 mile diameter circle centered on highways 63 and 34 intersection.) Dec. 29: 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Temp. 26 to 32; wind: 4 mph from SW. Overcast with some early morning fog and no snow on the ground.

Observers (14) in 5 parties: Charles and Darlene Ayres, Charles and Ann Current, Mrs. M. K. Hallberg, Nelson Hoskins (compiler), Donald and Elaine Johnson, Tom Johnson, Dick and Jean McGowen, plus Howard and Olive Griggs at a feeder.

Other species seen during census period: Belted Kingfisher, Red-breasted Merganser, Wild Turkey and Turkey Vulture.

Comments: The Turkey Vulture had been injured and was treated and released by the Wapello County Conservation Officer.

27. PRINCETON (15 mile diameter circle, centered at Folletts) Dec. 31: 6 a.m. to 5 p.m. Temp. 26 to 40; wind: 0-5 mph from NW. Clear, ground bare, river open.

Observers (8) in 3 parties: Elton Fawks, Margaret Flesher, William McCabe, William Martin, MaryLou Petersen, Peter C. Petersen (compiler), Steve Schaaf, Clark Scott.

Details of unusual observations: Glaucous Gull and Northern Shrike documented.

28. RATHBUN (a 15 mile diameter circle centered 1 mile south of the center of Rathbun Lake and including the dam area and part of the Wildlife Refuge) Dec. 15: 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Temp. 32 to 52; wind: 20 mph from SW, clear, no snow on the ground, lake mostly clear of ice.

Observers (25) in 10 parties: Charles and Darleen Ayres, Craig and Enid Coulter, Bill and Doris Cummings, Paul Egelund, Pearl Evans, Marlene Fullmer, Charles Hall, Sam Harper, Bill (compiler) and Marj Heusinkveld, Nelson and Randy Hoskins, Tom and Breck Johnson, Bob and Kay Malmberg, Maxine Morrow, Elva Neighbour, Agnes Pyle, Aline Reed, Bondine Rissler, Charlotte Scott.

29. RED ROCK (a 15-mile diameter circle centered on the mile long bridge on Highway 14 including Lake Red Rock and the Des Moines River.) Dec. 16: 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Temp. 4 to 10; wind: 35 mph from the East. Partly cloudy conditions with no precipitation, no snow cover, and 1 percent open water on the lake.

Observers (30) in 9 parties: (Plus 4 at 3 feeders). Eugene and Eloise Armstrong, Gladys Black, John Bowles, Sandy Bowles, Margaret Brooke, Bill and Zada Burrell, Bryon K. Clark, Barney Cook, Vic Daughtrey, Edith and Herb Dorow, Bob and Harriet Engelmann, Paul and Mary Felsing+, Diane Ford, Curt Froyen and Knoxville Science Club, + *, Bill Gilbert, Teresa Herrin (compiler), Ann Johnson, Paul Martsching, Pauly Mooney, Dick Mooney, Dean Mosmann, Diane Mosmann, Mike Mosman, Sue Reddish, Sandra Strong+, Matt Te Ronde, Bob Thornburg, David White, Hank Zaletel.

Details of unusual observations: A Brown Thrasher was reportedly seen. A Merlin was reported by Dean and Diane Mosman flying 8 miles north of Red Rock

Dam.

Other species seen during census period: A Golden Eagle was observed during the count period, although not on the count day.

30. SAC COUNTY (a 15 mile diameter circle beginning N of Highway 175 and 1 mile E of Highway 196, west to Black Hawk and Arrowhead Lakes N to Sac City and Haggie Park, E to Richardson Park, Calhoun Co. and S to Auburn. Area included Grant Park and Racoon River.) Dec. 28: 7:45 a.m. to 5:15 p.m. Temp. 24 to 24; wind: 0 mph, weather foggy - trees and vegetation ice and frost covered all day, no snow.

Observers (3) in 1 party: Greg Butcher (compiler), Rita Efta, Margaret Seeck.

Details of unusual observations: Sighting of 32 Red-headed Woodpeckers was a surprise.

Comments: We drove 39 miles, walked at least five miles. We did not get to cover Richardson Park in Calhoun County. We felt that the lack of ground cover kept us from observing some species that we expected to see along the roads.

31. SHENANDOAH (a 15-mile diameter circle with Farragut center, to include Riverton Refuge on west, Manti on east, Walnut Creek on the north and to J-52 road on the south.) Dec. 15: 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Temp. 28 to 51; wind: 15-25 mph from south; clear, water partly open, no snow-cover, wild food crop excellent.

Observers (9) in 4 parties: plus 1 at feeder, Rebecca Bernthal, Barbara Cunningham, Mr. and Mrs. Wayne Phipps, Ross Silcock, Mrs. Eldon Spears, Mrs. Edward Vaughn, Mrs. Donald Walters (compiler), and Barbara Wilson.

Other species seen during census period: Long-eared Owl, Belted Kingfisher.

32. SIOUX CITY (area same as previous year) Dec. 15: 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Temp. 30 to 50; wind: 10 mph from so. west in a.m. no. west in p.m. Clear and mild, no snow, abundant feed supply, extremely mild December.

Observers (8) in 5 parties: Carolyn Benne, Larry Benne, Carol Farmer, Larry Farmer, Marge Kennedy, Ray Kennedy, Robert Nickolson (compiler), Pat Williams.

Other species seen during census period: Yellow-bellied Sapsucker.

Comments: Due to the mild weather, a large number of Red-winged Blackbirds, Am. Robins, Red-headed Woodpeckers and Cedar Waxwings were observed.

33. SPIRIT LAKE (15 mile diameter circle using town of Spirit Lake as center point Kettleston Hogsback, Cayler Prairie, Gull Pt. St. Pk. Lower Gar., East and West Okoboji, Bib Spirit Lakes, and all of the surrounding area encompassed in the 15 mile circle.) Dec. ? : 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Temp. 35 to 16; wind: 5 mph from northwest; weather moderate in a.m. but wind velocity picked up and colder in p.m. No snow cover on ground, all areas accessible.

Observers (16) in 5 parties: Greg and Laurie Anliker, Gene and Eloise Armstrong, Ruth Anderson, LaVonne Foote, Doug Harr, Bob Hinshaw, Nina Loehr, Jim Marshall, Burdell and Irene Triplett, Stan Pugh, Connie Johnson, Jeff Verner, Loraine Wallace (compiler).

Details of unusual observations: No unusual birds were noted other than a Merlin which was observed through Gene Armstrong's telephoto lens and verified by four parties. It was seen at relatively close range and observed for fifteen minutes.

34. WATERLOO (A 15 mile diameter circle centered on center of Sec. 2 Maxfield Twp. Bremer Co. Ia., including Sweet Marsh, Wapsipinicon River bottom, Seven Bridges Pk. and surrounding farmland.) Dec. 16: 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. Temp. 0 to 7; wind 25-40 mph from NW. Very cold windy mostly clear day with a trace of snow on ground and water partly open.

Observers (9) in 3 parties: Antoinette Camarata, Russell Hays, Jody Hines,

Francis Moore, Bob Myers (compiler) Joe Schaufenbuehl, Ted Stone, Tom Stone, Tom Stone Jr.

Details of unusual observations: Northern Harrier, unusual in winter, was seen flying very low over Sweet Marsh. White rump and long narrow wings and tail were noted. Brewer's Blackbird showed a purplish head contrasting with greenish-black back, pale yellow eyes, and shorter tail. Red Crossbills, a first for our Christmas Count, were seen by all observers at ten to fifteen feet in excellent light. The crossed bills could even be seen.

Comments: The count day was almost cancelled with extremely strong winds and cold temperatures bringing the wind chill down to around 40 degrees below zero (-40) all day. Our total of species and individuals reflects not only the severe weather that day but the lack of most of our normal winter birds.

35. WESTFIELD (15 mile diameter circle centered on section 16, Sioux township, Plymouth County and including Big Sioux River bottoms.) Jan. 1: 5:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Temp. 28 to 30; wind: 0-5 mph from SW. Fog. Maximum visibility 500 yards. No snow. Big Sioux and Broken Kettle Creek running ice free.

Observers (9) in 5 parties: Carolyn and Lawrence Benne, Dick Bierman, Alan and Raymond Cummins, Carol and Larry Farmer (compiler) and Pat and Paul Williams.

Comments: Tape recorder used for attracting owls.

36. YELLOW RIVER (a 15 mile diameter circle centered on NE corner S8, T96N, R3W) Dec. 22: 6 a.m. to 5 p.m. Temp: 30 to 36; wind: 5-10 mph from SSE. Heavy fog all day, ground bare, waters partly open.

Observers (10) in 5 parties: Francis Arness, Elizabeth Botterff, Alan Branhagen, Larry Farmer, Ruth Fretheim, Darwin Koenig (compiler), Andrew Nimrod, Arnold and Delores Rohm, Joe Schaufenbuel.

Field Reports

Thomas H. Kent, Field Reports Editor
211 Richards Street
Iowa City, IA 52240

WEATHER AND HABITAT CONDITIONS

The mild winter contrasted sharply with the severity of the previous two winters. December was warm with practically no snow and much open water. January was also mild with little snow. February brought some snow and more normal winter temperatures.

GENERAL TRENDS

Bird population trends paralleled the weather pattern. Large numbers of waterfowl and gulls remained through December and in the s. w. and n. w. geese and mallards overwintered in large numbers. The number and variety of lingering passerines was also unusual. Winter finches were greatly decreased in numbers and variety. As usual, the Christmas Bird Counts produced the most intensive birding. Ross Silcock presents the results of the CBC's elsewhere in this issue. I have not duplicated information from the CBC's unless it was reported separately to me.

UNUSUAL SIGHTINGS

Casual species were Ross' Goose in s. w. Iowa (see CBC), Glaucous Gull at Davenport, Say's Phoebe at St. Anthony, Marshall Co., and Varied Thrush at Monticello. A number of unusual species for winter are reported in the CBC -- Greater Scaup, Turkey Vulture, Broad-winged Hawk, House Wren, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Yellow-headed Blackbird, Northern Oriole, and Dickcissel. Northern

Oriole was also at a feeder in n. Iowa. Golden Eagles wintered in n.e. Iowa. Osprey and Barn Owl were reported from s. w. Iowa.

LOONS THROUGH DUCKS

Common Loon: Lingered into first week of Dec. in Fremont Co. (IG).

Great Blue Heron: Singles at L. Macbride on 2 Dec. (TK), Cedar Rapids on 15 Dec. (WN), and n. Linn Co. on 12 Jan. (FT,PW).

Whistling Swan: 50 were still at Lock & Dam 9 in n.e. Iowa on 6 Dec. (DK).

Snow Goose: 100,000 remained in Fremont Co. until at least mid Jan. (IG,DP fide RP).

Ross' Goose: See CBC.

Canada Goose: 2,000 wintered in the Ruthven area, Clay Co. (WS fide JD); 350 were at Bay's Branch, Guthrie Co. on 17 Jan. (RC); and 18 were at L. Manawa, Council Bluffs on 15-17 Jan. (CS).

Wood Duck: One was reported from DeSoto N.W.R. on 25 Feb. (JR).

American Wigeon: One lingered at Sioux Center until 1 Dec. (JV).

Mallard: Large numbers wintered in Iowa: 100,000 in Fremont Co. (DP fide RP), 11,000 at Bay's Branch on 17 Jan. (RC), 1,000 at Big Creek S.P. in early Jan. (HZ,LZ), 200 at Rock Valley in n. w. Iowa all winter (JV).

American Black Duck: There were reports from many areas of the state: 10 from Princeton A. on 1 Dec. (TK,TSh), 2 at L. Macbride on 2 Dec. (TK), 1 at Coralville Res. on 9 Dec. (TK), 2 at Bay's Branch on 17 Jan. (RC), 2 at Lansing on 1 Feb. (DK), 2 at Davenport on 23 Feb. (PP), 1 at DeSoto N.W.R. on 25 Feb. (JR).

Common Pintail: 1 was at Lansing on 1 Feb. (DK) and 5 at DeSoto N.W.R. on 25 Feb. (JR).

Ring-necked Duck: 3 were at Bay's Branch on 17 Jan. (RC).

Greater Scaup: See CBC.

Lesser Scaup: 3 were at Bay's Branch on 17 Jan. (RC).

VULTURES THROUGH TURKEY

Turkey Vulture: See CBC.

Osprey: Winter records of this species are unusual. One was reported from Riverton Area on 17 Jan. (IG).

Bald Eagle: Numbers along the Mississippi R. were down slightly -- 252 were seen by air from Bellevue to Keokuk on 12 Jan., 10 percent less than last year (PP). Good numbers wintered along the Missouri R. with 40-50 at Forney L. on 9 Jan. (RP) and 15 at DeSoto N.W.R. on 25 Feb. (JR). One ad. was at Big Spirit L. on 9-10 Dec. (DH, LF fide DH) and immatures were at Center L., Dickinson Co., on 6 Jan. (LH fide DH) and at Coralville L. on 1 Jan. (TK).

Northern Harrier: Wintering birds in n.e. Iowa (DK) and at Big Creek S.P. (HZ, LZ) were considered unusual.

Cooper's Hawk: Two reports: 1 on 20 Dec. in Boone Co. (JMS) and 1 and 5 Jan. at Des Moines (DMoo fide WB).

Red-tailed Hawk: Most observers thought that numbers were increased. Darwin Koenig found 14-35 per 100 miles traveled or 1 per 4 miles on seven trips in Allamakee Co.

Red-shouldered Hawk: One was seen at the Coralville Res. on 5 Jan (FT,PW).

Broad-winged Hawk: See CBC.

Rough-legged Hawk: Several active observers reported this species to be decreased (JDG,DH,JSb) or absent (DMos,JV,TK). Koenig saw 15 in n.e. Iowa in Jan. Only 7 others were reported (IG,TH fide RC, DH, JR).

Golden Eagle: 1-2 were still present in Allamakee Co. on 6 Dec., 1 Feb. and 12 Feb. (DK).

Merlin: One was reported from Red Rock Res. on 16 Dec. (DMes) See CBC.

American Kestrel: Many observers reported increased numbers from many areas of the state (JD,IG,DK,DMoo,JSb,JV).

Gray Partridge: 26 were seen in Pocahontas Co. on 13 Jan. (RC).

Wild Turkey: One was seen at the Coralville Res. on 26 Dec. (FT,PW).

CRANES THROUGH TERNS

American Coot: Wintering birds were at Bay's Branch on 17 Jan. (RC) and Lansing from 23 Jan. to 12 Feb. (DK).

Killdeer: 1 was at Matsell Bridge in n. Linn Co. on 1 Jan. (FT,PW) and 3 at Lock & Dam 9 on 23 Jan. (DK).

Common Snipe: The only report was from Yellow R.F. on 12 Feb. (DK).

Glaucous Gull: An immature was seen at Lock & Dam 14 on 16 Dec. during the Davenport CBC (+TK,TSh).

Herring Gull: 3 stayed at the Coralville Res. until 1 Jan. (TK).

Ring-billed Gull: 2-50 remained at Davenport through January (PP).

PIGEONS THROUGH WOODPECKERS

Barn Owl: 2 were reported n. of Shenandoah on 3 Dec. and 1 at the same location on 21 Jan. (DP fide RP).

Great Horned Owl: A nesting bird was found on 23 Feb. near Laurens (RC).

Snowy Owl: Three reports: Dec.-Jan. at Ft. Atkinson, Winneshiek Co. (KRo fide JSB), 1 Jan. in Dickinson Co. an injured bird sent to Iowa State University (JD), and 25 Jan. in Buena Vista Co. (EC).

Long-eared Owl: There were several reports from Big Creek S.P. and Story Co. (DMos,HZ,LZ). The only other report was from n. Linn Co. (FT).

Short-eared Owl: There were many reports from Story and Polk Cos. (JM-S,DMos,GA fide WB,HZ,LZ). There were two reports from n.w. Iowa (DBi,RC) and one from e. Iowa (PP).

Saw-whet Owl: Reports were from Central City, Linn Co. on 29 Dec. (FT, m.ob.), Marshalltown on 21 Jan. (CKu,HKu,DD,RZ) and Ledges S.P. from 9-24 Feb. (GF fide JD,HZ,LZ,JD).

Belted Kingfisher: 2 were at Ames on 28 Feb. (JR). More than usual wintered in n.e. Iowa (JSb).

Common Flicker: 1 red-shafted was seen at Hamburg on 22 Jan. (IG).

Pileated Woodpecker: 1 was seen at Nora Springs, Floyd Co. on 17 Dec. and 8 Jan. (DAB).

Red-headed Woodpecker: Reported as numerous by m.ob. in contrast to last year.

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: Singles reported from 4 areas.

Hairy Woodpecker: Doing well along Rock and Big Sioux Rivers in n.w. Iowa (JV).

FLYCATCHERS THROUGH STARLING

Say's Phoebe: This species is unusual at any time, but what about one showing up at our President's front yard near St. Anthony, on 22 Dec. to be photographed (+CK,HK)!

Horned Lark: Several observers reported numbers decreased in Dec. and Jan. (DBi,JD,DMos,JV) perhaps more than usual. However, they are usually scarce during this period, and there was no snow to concentrate them along roads.

American Crow: 1000 wintered at Ames (HZ,LZ), 100 at Sioux Center (JV).

Tufted Titmouse: Joe Schaufenbuel noted a continued decrease in n.e. Iowa.

Red-breasted Nuthatch: The only reports were from Shenandoah (BWA) and Cherokee (DBi).

Brown Creeper: Reported as exceptionally common at Sioux Center (JV); only other report was from Ames (HZ,LZ).

House Wren: See CBC.

Northern Mockingbird: One was at Jester P. on 18 Dec. (DMos) and one was in Cedar Rapids on several occasions (WN).

Brown Thrasher: Two wintered in Davenport (MLP,ME fide PP) and 3 in Linn Co. (WN).

American Robin: Many wintered. Some were reported by almost all observers.

Varied Thrush: Paul and Margret Whear reported this bird at their rural home located in a large cedar grove near Monticello, and it was seen by many observers (+FT,PW,TG, +TK,CKn,BKn,MN,TSh,PP (photographed), (CS). It was present from mid-Dec. through mid-Feb.



Varied Thrush near Monticello

Photo by Peter C. Petersen

Hermit Thrush: Wintering birds were found in Boone Co. on 9 Feb. (+HZ,LZ) and Cedar Rapids on 28 Feb. (WN).

Eastern Bluebird: The only report was from Nine Eagles S.P., Decatur Co. (JDG).

Golden-crowned Kinglet: Good numbers were reported from Fremont and Sioux Cos. (IG,JV).

Ruby-crowned Kinglet: One was seen near the Coralville Dam on 16 Dec. (+TK). See also CBC.

Cedar Waxwing: 300-500 were at Nine Eagles S.P. on 26 Dec. (JDG).

Northern Shrike: 2 were seen in n.e. Iowa (DK) and 2 in n.w. Iowa (+DBi,JC fide RC).

Loggerhead Shrike: 1 was reported from Cherokee on 29 Dec. (DBi) and they were said to be scarce at Lamoni (JDG). We need documentation of winter shrikes because of the difficulty separating the two species and because of the need to determine their winter status in various areas of the state.

MEADOWLARKS THROUGH BUNTINGS

Western Meadowlark: Numbers were down in Sioux Co. (JV). The only other meadowlark report was from DeSoto N.W.R. (JR).

Yellow-headed Blackbird: See CBC.

Red-winged Blackbird: Many wintered and were considered unusual in northern parts of the state (DK,RC,JV,DH).

Northern Oriole: A male at Nora Springs, Floyd Co., was a remarkable winter record (DAB). See also CBC.

Rusty Blackbird: Reports were from Cherokee (DBi), Rush L., Palo Alto Co. (RC), DeSoto N.W.R. (JR) and n.e. Iowa (JSb).

Brewer's Blackbird: See CBC.

Common Grackle: Several were reported from widely scattered areas in the state including one from the n.e. corner at New Albin (DK).

- Brown-headed Cowbird:** The only one reported was at Rush L., Palo Alto Co., on 23 Feb. (RC).
- Dickcissel:** One was reported from Squaw Creek P., Linn Co. (FT). See CBC.
- Evening Grosbeak:** The only reports were from Hamburg, Fremont Co. (IG) and Nora Springs (DAB).
- Purple Finch:** There were only three reports this winter (DBi, DMos, WN).
- Common Redpoll:** There were no verified reports.
- Pine Siskin:** Siskins were scarce. The only wintering reports were at Cherokee (DBi) and Davenport (MLP, PP).
- Red Crossbill:** One female was at Sheldon, O'Brien Co. on 4 Jan. (JV).
- Rufous-sided Towhee:** Wintering birds were present at Iowa City (western race, TK) and LeClaire, Scott Co. (DM's fide PP).
- Field Sparrow:** One was observed at Yellow R.F. on 12 Feb. (DK).
- Harris' Sparrow:** Good numbers were present in w. Iowa (DBi, RC, JV, JR, DMos) and 1 was in Johnson Co. on 12 Jan. (TK).
- White-throated Sparrow:** Wintering birds were observed at feeders in Iowa City and Davenport (TK, ME fide PP, PP). Birds were singing at Iowa City on 1 Jan. and at Sioux Center on 27 Feb. (JV).
- Fox Sparrow:** One was seen at Coralville Res. on 5 Jan. (FT).
- Lapland Longspur:** 30 were in n. Linn Co. on 2 Feb. (FT, TG) and 150 in the same area on 10 Feb. (TK, CKn, BKn, MN, TSh).
- Snow Bunting:** Numbers were down with scattered reports, mostly in Dec.
+ -- documented

CONTRIBUTORS

Dick Bierman, Cherokee; Woodward Brown, Des Moines; Dorothy A. Brunner, Nora Springs; Edwin G. Crocker, Storm Lake; Raymond Cummins, Pocahontas; James Dinsmore, Ames; Ione Getscher, Hamburg; J. Donald Gillaspay, Lamoni; Douglas Harr, Larchwood; Thomas Kent, Iowa City; Pearl Knopp, Marble Rock; Darwin Koenig, Decorah; Carl Kurtz, St. Anthony; Dean Mosman, Elkhart; Weir Nelson, Ely; Peter Petersen, Davenport; Ruth Phipps, Shenandoah; John Robinson, Ames; Joseph M. Schaefer, Ames; Joe Schaufenbuel, St. Lucas; Conrad F. Schlemmer, Council Bluffs; Fred Thompson, Marion; John Van Dyk, Sioux Center; Betty Walters, Shenandoah; Hank Zaletel, Ames; Linda Zaletel, Ames.

OTHER OBSERVERS

Gene Armstrong (WB); Judy Carlson (RC); Mrs. Dale Devid (CKu); Margret Ebert (PP); Gary Frederick (JD); Tom Gates (FT); Linda Hinshaw (DH); Thaine Hopkins (RC); Wally Jardine (RC); Bernie Knight (TK); Calvin Knight (TK); Hazel Kurtz (CKu); Mr. and Mrs. Don Moeller (PP); Dick Mooney (WB); Michael Newlon (TK); Mary Lou Petersen (PP); Don Priebe (RP); Keith Rowley (JSB); Clark Scott (PP); Thomas Shires (TK); Wayne Souer (JD); Pete Wickham (FT); Ruth Zorn (CKu).

COMMENTS

In these comments I would like to briefly review the birds seen in 1979 and discuss the Blue List for 1980.

The year 1979 was a good one for birding in Iowa in spite of scarcity of northern winter species. According to my review, the 291 species reported in IBL for the year comprise 169 of 175 Field Checklist species and 22 casual and accidental species. The Field Checklist species not reported were Snowy Egret, King Rail, Whimbrel, Buff-breasted Sandpiper, Bewick's Wren, and Common Redpoll. Casual and accidental species reported include Red-necked Grebe, Ross' Goose, Black Scoter, Surf Scoter, White-winged Scoter, Ferruginous Hawk, Prairie

Falcon, Greater Prairie Chicken, Sandhill Crane, Yellow Rail, Purple Gallinule, Purple Sandpiper, Glaucous Gull, Black-backed Three-toed Woodpecker, Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, Say's Phoebe, Western Pewee, Varied Thrush, Mountain Bluebird, Townsend's Solitaire, Yellow-throated Warbler, and Prairie Warbler. I am not aware of a previous compilation of a year's species list for Iowa, but I thought it might be useful as a means of keeping tract for future determination of status changes.

American Birds has just published "The Blue List for 1980" which is a "new" annual "early warning list" of declining, threatened or vulnerable species. First started in 1971 to augment the Endangered Species List, the Blue List has been revised annually by asking birders with more than ten years' experiences in their area to note additions or subtractions to the list. This year, in an attempt to remove bias and encourage more "voters", the participants were asked to develop their lists from scratch. The 210 respondents identified 297 species of which 73 were Blue Listed for 1980.

American Birds has encouraged reporting of these species to subregional and regional editors for use in development of their seasonal reports.

Woody Brown and Nick Halmi encouraged contributors to IBL's Field Reports to report their observations of Blue List species. As a contributor, and now as Field Reports Editor, I have found two problems in using the Blue List for reporting. First, the list is based on opinions with little representation from Iowa. Often birds are put on the list because of votes from regions other than ours. Second, the data needed to "watch" these species is not the same for all species. I would conclude that we should not evaluate all of the Blue List species in the same manner and that we should be concerned about some species not on the Blue List.

Of the 73 Blue Listed species for 1980, 55 are regular in Iowa (listed on the IOU Field Checklist). I have sorted these into three categories. The 14 rare species are worth reporting in all instances. These include Western Grebe, Least Bittern, Cooper's Hawk, Red-shouldered Hawk, Swainson's Hawk, Merlin, King Rail, Piping Plover, Common Tern, Little Tern, Barn Owl, Bewick's Wren, Yellow-breasted Chat and Henslow's Sparrow.

The 20 uncommon species should often be reported, especially when more than usual are present or when absent or decreased is their usual habitat. Reporting all of them would produce too much data to handle. Species in this category are Common Loon, Am. White Pelican, Double-crested Cormorant, Black-crowned Night Heron, American Bittern, Am. Black Duck, Osprey, Upland Sandpiper, Long-eared Owl, Short-eared Owl, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Eastern Phoebe, Willow Flycatcher, Winter Wren, Carolina Wren, Eastern Bluebird, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Loggerhead Shrike, Bell's Vireo and Vesper Sparrow.

There are 21 Blue Listed species which I would consider relatively common in Iowa. Individual reports of these species are of interest but are of little help in evaluating their frequency and may be misleading. Surveys done in a reproducible manner are needed to detect changes. Species in this category are Great Blue Heron, Canvasback, Turkey Vulture, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Northern Harrier, American Kestrel, C. Bobwhite, Black Tern, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Whip-poor-will, Common Nighthawk, Red-headed Woodpecker, Hairy Woodpecker, Purple Martin, Least Flycatcher, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Warbling Vireo, Yellow Warbler, Eastern Meadowlark, Dickcissel and Grasshopper Sparrow.

Some non-Blue Listed species which I think merit more careful evaluation in Iowa include Common Gallinule, Belted Kingfisher, Tufted Titmouse, Marsh Wren, Blue-winged Warbler and Lark Sparrow. I would appreciate hearing your reactions to the Blue List and how to deal with it.

I would like to thank contributors for getting their reports to me on time and apologize for confusion on the deadline for the winter season. Almost all reports are now coming to me arranged in check list order on 8½ by 11 inch paper.

Please send your spring reports by June 1. Send stamps if you need report forms or documentation forms.

Report of IOU Checklist Committee - 1979

The committee evaluated the documentation of a Western Pewee (*Contopus sordidus*) seen and heard by Joe Schaufenbuel on 21 June 1979 at Elm Lake, near Belmond in Wright County. This species was approved for addition to the Iowa Ornithologists' Union Checklist of Iowa Birds (IBL 47:31-40, 1977). With the addition of the Western Pewee and the Hoary Redpoll (*Acanthis hornemannii*) in 1978 the official list of Iowa birds now encompasses 350 species.

The function of the IOU Checklist Committee is (a) to periodically revise the IOU Field Checklist and (b) to approve any additions to or deletions from the Iowa Ornithologists' Union Checklist of Iowa Birds including annual reporting in IBL of any changes and periodic publication of updates of the official checklist.

During 1980 the committee plans to review the procedures and criteria for decisions on new species and to work with the group of individuals writing *The Birds of Iowa* in defining the status of Iowa species. We welcome your opinions and suggestions on selection criteria for new species. -- THOMAS H. KENT (chairperson), WOODWARD H. BROWN, W. ROSS SILCOCK.

BOOK REVIEWS



The Gift of Birds -- Howard F. Robinson, ed. -- National Wildlife Federation, Washington, D. C. -- 176 p., 220 color illustrations -- 1979 -- \$12.95.

This book is excellent for one who likes to pick up a book and read a brief chapter in a spare moment. It contains the work of many well known authors including several who are not considered nature writers. The information is presented as poetry, stories, history, art, myths and folklore. Among the artists is Iowa's own Maynard Reece. Specific topics include courtship, communication, flight, migration and behavior. The layouts and format are very well done and round out an excellent volume. ed.

Working Bibliography of the Bald Eagle -- Jeffrey L. Lincer, William S. Clark, and Maurice N. LeFranc, Jr. -- National Wildlife Federation, Washington, D. C. -- 246 p. -- 1979 -- \$9.85, paperbound.

Last March we reviewed the N. W. F.'s Owl Bibliography. Now we have a similar work covering the Bald Eagle. It begins with a state by state summary of present and historical wintering and breeding information. The master list of

citations is alphabetical by author. I noticed several of Elton Fawks IBL citations were omitted. The permuted list of keywords facilitates the use of the master list. Hopefully more working bibliographies will be forthcoming. ed.

Birds in Fact and Legend -- Walter Harter -- Sterling Publishing Co., Inc., New York -- 128 p., 12 line drawings -- 1979 -- \$5.95.

This little book is composed of a series of brief chapters on various aspects of common birds. It is written primarily for the nonbirder but will probably interest the beginning bird watcher. ed.

The Incubation Book -- A. F. Anderson Brown -- Saiga Publishing Co., Ltd., Hindhead, Surrey, U. K. -- 232 p., 7 color plates, many photographs, line drawings and diagrams -- 1979 -- L. 6.00 (about \$13.50).

Anyone involved in raising domestic waterfowl will find this volume packed with information. The various breeds are described, housing, and ponding are covered as are ailments, showing techniques, and preparation for the table. ed.

The Summer Woodlands -- John R. Quinn -- The Chatham Press -- 143 Sound Beach Ave., Old Greenwich, Conn. -- 128 p., 49 line drawings -- 1980 -- \$9.95.

The author presents his perceptions of summer woodland experiences by writing and sketching. Both enlightening and exhilarating, this shared venture fully explores a realm of fascination for all who find wonder in every season. While not entirely devoted to birds the book is sprinkled with reference to them. ed.

Now in paperback from Houghton-Mifflin Co., Boston: **Watching Birds** -- 5.95 -- IBL Vol. 47, p. 68. **A Guide to Bird Finding East of the Mississippi** -- Olin Sewall Pettingill -- \$7.95 -- IBL Vol. 47 p. 114.

Combination List and Checklist for Birds of North America -- James A. Tucker -- River City Publishing Co., Box 4471, Austin, Texas -- 350 p. -- 1979 -- \$16.50 including postage.

This looseleaf book provides a record keeping system for recording a North American list, plus state lists, year lists or whatever you can get in the 90 columns provided for each species. It will hold lots of data and can be adapted to your own system or needs. It is a convenient repository for any avid lister. ed.

I.O.U. Publications and Supplies

Those who don't attend our meetings have little idea of the many items available from the I.O.U. To remedy this the following listing brings together the items available, cost and person from whom to order. Order from Mrs. Patricia Layton, Librarian, 1580 Linmar Dr. N.E. Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52402.

Annotated Checklist of the Birds of Iowa, Woodward H. Brown - 1971 -- \$1.00 + .30 postage and handling.

Checklist of Iowa Birds I.O.U. Checklist Committee - 1977 -- \$.50 + .30 postage and handling.

Birding Areas of Iowa - Peter C. Petersen, Ed. - 1979 -- \$4.50 + .30 postage and handling.

Iowa Bird Life - back issues -- \$1.50 each + .30 postage and handling for one issue, or inquire.

Order from Mrs. Ruth Buckles, Treasurer, 5612 Urbandale Ave., Des Moines, Iowa 50310.

I.O.U. Decals (go on outside of windows) -- \$.50 + .15 postage and handling.

I.O.U. Brassard or Arm Patches -- \$1.50 + .15 postage and handling.

I.O.U. Field Check Lists - (uses A.B.A. names) - 1978 - one -- \$.05 + .15 postage and handling.

six -- \$.25 + .30 postage and handling.

twelve -- \$.50 + .45 postage and handling.

twenty-five -- \$1.05 + .60 postage and handling.

fifty -- \$2.10 + .90 postage and handling.

hundred -- \$3.50 + \$1.50 postage and handling.

All checks should be payable to the Iowa Ornithologists' Union.

Bird Census Symposium

The symposium on "Estimating Populations of Terrestrial Birds" will be held October 20-24, 1980, at Asilomar, near Monterey, California. The invited papers, given by authors from the United States, Canada, Europe, New Zealand, and Australia, will cover a wide range of subjects. The principal topics will be the problems, methods, and analyses of bird censusing. There will be a variety of field trips during and after the Symposium to explore methods of censusing and habitats of coastal and interior California. The Asilomar conference grounds are located in a State Park on Monterey Bay and provides an attractive and stimulating setting. For further information write the Symposium organizers: Dr. C. John Ralph and Dr. J. Michael Scott, Bird Census Symposium, P.O. Box 43, Hawaii Volcanoes National Park, Hawaii 96718.

Information Needed

Goeffery Tunnicliffe, Canterburn Museum, Rolleston Ave., Christchurch 1, New Zealand is writing a paper on avian-mammalian interspecific fighting. He would like descriptions and photographs relating to this topic. Contact either Mr. Tunnicliffe in New Zealand or Dr. Gerald Kaufmann, Dept. of Biology, Loras College, Dubuque, Iowa 52001. ed.

Pierce Book Company

Fred and Reva Pierce have decided to retire from their book business and sold the stock to MaryLou and Peter Petersen. The inventory is now in Davenport and the new name and address is Petersen Book Company, P.O. Box 966, Davenport, Iowa 52805, Phone 319-355-7051, evenings. We hope to continue their good service and attention to detail. Books will be available at the spring meeting in Spirit Lake, ed.

Cover

Our 1980 cover portrait of a Long-eared Owl is the work of Clark Scott. A rapidly developing young artist, Clark is a member of the Quad-City and Illinois Audubon Society and the I.O.U. He spends many hours exploring the Rock River Valley near his home in Moline, Illinois. ed.